

**FINAL EVALUATION OF  
THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES  
COMMITTEE ON POPULATION  
COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT  
(936-3035)**

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by  
Julie DaVanzo  
Barbara Seligman

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Edited and Produced by

Population Technical Assistance Project  
1611 North Kent Street, Suite 508  
Arlington, VA 22209 USA  
Phone: 703/247-8630  
Fax: 703/247-8640  
E-mail: POPTECH@bhm.com

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AED	Academy for Educational Development
AFR/ARTS	Applied Research and Technology Support Office, Africa Bureau, (USAID)
APHA	American Public Health Association
C&R	<i>Contraception and Reproduction: Health Consequences for Women and Children in the Developing World</i> (NRC report)
CA	cooperating agency
CBASSE	Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education (National Academy of Science)
CIN	Committee on International Nutrition (National Research Council)
CPC	Carolina Population Center
CPHN	Center for Population, Health and Nutrition (USAID)
CPOP	Committee on Population (National Academy of Science)
CTO	cognizant technical officer
DFA	Development Fund for Africa
DHS	Demographic and Health Surveys (project)
DNC	<i>Developing New Contraceptives</i> (NRC report)
HHRAA	Health and Human Resources Analysis for Africa (project)
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development (held in Cairo, August 1994)
IOM	Institute of Medicine
IMPACT	Innovative Materials for Population Action (project)
IUSSP	International Union for the Scientific Study of Population
LDC	less developed country
NAE	National Academy of Engineering
NAP	National Academy Press
NAS	National Academy of Sciences
NCIH	National Center for International Health
NGO	non-governmental organization
NRC	National Research Council
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
ONPI	Office of News and Public Information (National Academy of Sciences)
PAA	Population Association of America
PRB	Population Reference Bureau
PDR	Population and Development Review
PGED	<i>Population Growth and Economic Development</i> [NRC report]
PHN	population, health and nutrition
POP/P&E	Office of Population/Policy and Evaluation Division (USAID)
PPC	Policy and Program Coordination Bureau (USAID)
RAPID	Resources for the Awareness of Population Impacts on Development (project)
RH	reproductive health
RRC	Report Review Committee (National Research Council)
R&D	Research and Development Bureau (USAID)

R&D/H	Research and Development Bureau, Health Office (USAID)
SOW	scope of work
S&T	Science and Technology Bureau (USAID)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFS	World Fertility Survey



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Background

The USAID Office of Population has had two cooperative agreements with the National Academy of Sciences' Committee on Population (NAS/CPOP) between 1985 and 1995. Both agreements provided funding to support research on population issues of special interest to the international population community. The purpose of this evaluation has been to determine how USAID may make best use of the expertise of the NAS based on the experience of the previous two cooperative agreements. The evaluation was conducted over the period March 8 - 31, 1995, by Dr. Julie DaVanzo, Director of the Family in Economic Development Center at RAND, and Ms. Barbara Seligman, Senior Research Scientist, The Futures Group International.

The Committee on Population (CPOP) was established as a standing committee of NAS in 1983 to bring the knowledge and methods of the population sciences to bear on major issues of science and public policy. As with the rest of NAS, scholars who are members of CPOP, or participate in the panels, workshops and expert meetings that it organizes, serve as volunteers, donating their time without compensation. Committee members are chosen for their particular expertise and with regard to appropriate balance. From its inception, CPOP members have represented a variety of disciplinary perspectives, including demography, sociology, economics, anthropology, public health, medicine, and statistics, and have brought expertise on a wide range of population-related topics and on nearly all parts of the world.

## Strengths of the National Academy of Sciences and its Committee on Population

NAS/CPOP's scientific objectivity, independence, high quality work, and value are uniformly recognized. While some of the findings presented in NAS/CPOP's work may have already been generally accepted in the population community, the imprimatur of the Academy has served to give them scientific credibility and legitimization and probably has made them available to a broader audience. Because of the prestige of the Academy, NAS committees are able to draw on leaders in the field. The USAID/CPOP agreement provides the opportunity to interest top-notch scientists in topics of concern at USAID.

Since its inception, CPOP has been very fortunate to have distinguished and hard-working chairpersons and members of committees, panels, and working groups, excellent study directors, and capable and dedicated staff. All NAS staff with whom the evaluation team spoke noted that CPOP members were among the most dedicated in the Academy, and that CPOP staff were also regarded as being of the highest caliber.

Another strength is the excellent infrastructure of NAS, which includes careful oversight of the design and staffing of projects, rigorous review of reports, and offices that specialize in the preparation of publications and dissemination to scientific audiences, Congress, and the media. Any document, however brief, incorporating the advice or findings of an NRC group and intended for distribution outside the institution is considered an NRC report and is reviewed by a group other than its authors. The large number of press clippings summarizing

key findings from various NAS/CPOP studies attest to the effectiveness of NAS's public dissemination activities.

Although the financial cost of a full-scale NRC panel study is relatively high, the total value of the inputs to the activity is considerably higher, given the considerable amount of time that committee and panel members volunteer to CPOP activities free of charge. Furthermore, the USAID/POP support for the activity is leveraged by the contributions of other donors. Hence, the evaluation team feels that the cooperative agreement with NAS/CPOP is a very good deal for USAID/POP. NAS is a top-notch organization, and the CPOP work raises consciousness of population issues and provides scientific legitimization for some of the key premises underlying USAID/POP activities in ways that no other CA could. Furthermore, the money is highly leveraged both because of the contributions of other donors and because committee members volunteer their time free of charge.

Since 1985 CPOP has undertaken a number of activities on topics of great interest to USAID and has issued a number of reports that are viewed as very important scientific contributions to the population field. These include large, interdisciplinary studies of population growth and economic development, family planning program effectiveness, the health consequences of contraceptive use and controlled fertility, contraceptive development, and population dynamics in Sub-Saharan Africa. A panel on reproductive health (RH) has just begun. For such studies, NAS/CPOP's advantage over other CAs lies in the neutrality and scientific objectivity it brings to issues and the extent of deliberation with which the issues are approached, especially for issues that are often discussed in political terms (e.g., promotion of reproductive rights). The multidisciplinary composition of the RH Panel and the top-notch scientific credentials of the experts who are willing to participate because of the prestige of the Academy means that the weight of its consensus-based conclusions and recommendations will be widely respected. No other CA could fill the role of the Committee for such a study.

CPOP's unique strengths lie primarily its political neutrality, which is upheld through the Academy's rigorous reviews of draft reports, by the composition of its committees, panels, and working groups, the attendant prestige of the Academy, and the multidisciplinary and multi-institutional composition of the Committee and the groups it assembles to address the issues it studies. The Committee is especially well positioned to prepare syntheses of existing research.

## **Drawbacks**

These benefits are not without their costs. One cost of scientific rigor is time. NAS Panel studies typically take 18-36 months before they are published. While other accelerated options are available, they are only appropriate for examining narrow, technical questions. Another consequence of the Academy's scientific rigor is that conclusions are often not clear-cut, but rather are often highly qualified, sometimes to such a degree that the sponsor may not find them particularly useful.

Because of the voluntary participation of the members, the Committee is not as well suited to conducting original research as it is to synthesizing existing research. Occasionally, when gaps emerge over the course of CPOP's synthesizing, some further data analysis may be warranted. It is not clear that data analysis is the best use of CPOP staff resources. CPOP

has used a variety of mechanisms as alternatives to using staff to conduct data analysis, including commissioning papers, consultancies, and subcontracts. CPOP should consider greater reliance on these alternative mechanisms for producing data analysis in the future.

## **Selection of Activities, Formats, and Participants**

NRC activities can take many different forms. They differ in the amount of time that they require to undertake, in their cost, in the rigor of the report review process, and in such aspects as whether or not they attempt to reach a consensus regarding conclusions and recommendations, or whether or not the participants must be approved by the Governing Board. CPOP generally has not used some of the other formats used by other NRC committees. The evaluation team recommends that USAID/POP and CPOP seriously consider the use of such formats as question-and-answer panels, letter reports, open meetings, occasional lectures or lecture series, roundtables or fora, public briefings, and white papers in the future, in some cases as a means of reaching audiences (e.g., CAs, NGOs, the Hill) that currently are not as familiar as they should be with NAS/CPOP work.

The research agenda of CPOP and the specific questions to be addressed are decided through a deliberative process that involves the sponsoring agencies, committee staff, and committee members. The ideas are typically discussed at length at the committee meeting, with careful consideration of whether the topic is appropriate for an NRC activity, whether CPOP members and staff have the appropriate expertise either to address the issue or to assemble a panel or working group to do so, whether sufficient evidence or data exists to warrant a systematic assessment, and whether additional funding is likely to be secured if it is not already available. CPOP has generally been conservative in selecting questions to address and has not taken on questions that are inappropriate for an NAS effort or are beyond its expertise or capacity; however, it has sometimes been the case that the need for answers to those questions is not as pressing by the time a study is completed as it was when the study was designed. Given the length of time to complete a full panel study, it is important that the questions addressed by a CPOP Panel be ones that are still likely to be of interest several years later and that this be considered in deciding which major activities to undertake.

NAS/CPOP studies typically have their greatest impact when they satisfy two conditions: (1) they address questions of current policy importance; and (2) they have clear conclusions and recommendations. In some cases, more direction from the sponsor in formulating the research questions could help ensure that a study will have its greatest possible impact.

In selecting participants, careful effort is made to represent different subareas of expertise (both with regard to the topic and the geographic areas being covered), different points of view, and different disciplinary approaches. The prestige of the Academy helps entice many top-of-their-field experts to participate in NRC activities. For major activities on which a consensus must be reached, the participants must be approved by the NRC Governing Board. Similar procedures are used to recommend new members for CPOP.

Over the years, CPOP has had a strong academic research orientation. This has shaped the questions that it has addressed and the formats that it has used. Because of this orientation, the committee has not fully exploited opportunities to make its end products as useful and broadly known to policy makers, NGOs, and CAs as they could be. It would be useful for one

participant and one reviewer to represent the perspective (though not necessarily point of view) of the typical USAID or CA reader (e.g., who probably gives more attention to the conclusions and recommendations than to the detailed science). The writing of summaries and conclusions must be given careful attention regarding how these will stand on their own.

The present membership of the CPOP is somewhat less diverse than in the recent past. The present Committee does not include members from and currently working in developing countries or from policy-making or dissemination-oriented institutions. To enhance the usefulness of CPOP studies and dissemination efforts to non-academic and international audiences, the team recommends that NAS/CPOP should always include at least one member with a policy perspective and someone from a developing country. In some cases, one person may fulfill both of these requirements.

Staff of sponsoring agencies are welcome at all open meetings of the Committee. Typically the USAID CTO attends the meetings, but attendance by other USAID staff has often been disappointing. USAID staff, especially senior staff, should be encouraged to attend NAS/CPOP meetings. Their presence at the meeting ensures that CPOP's contributions are likely to be more fully appreciated by their intended policy audience, and sends a signal to the population research community, and the CPOP members in particular, that USAID has a keen interest in ensuring that its policies and programs are based on good science. To further enhance communication with USAID, the CPOP study director should meet not only with the CTO, but also with other USAID senior staff after Committee meetings (and perhaps beforehand also) to brief them on relevant developments.

## **Publications and Other Dissemination Activities**

The NAS/CPOP members see the international scientific community as the principal audience for their work, primarily because that is the audience that they have a comparative advantage in reaching. CPOP members have expressed a strong desire to conduct research that is useful to policymakers, however, the actual effort involved in ensuring policy relevance of research projects and communicating research results to interested policymakers lies outside the members' areas of comparative advantage. Responsibility for maintaining policy relevance and getting the research findings and recommendations into the hands of those who can make good policy or programmatic use of them could be placed with NAS/CPOP staff, the sponsor, another CA with special strengths in policy communication (PRB was often mentioned), or some combination of the three. However, as noted above, the team feels that CPOP and its panels would benefit from having at least one member with experience in policy-making and dissemination and that one of the report reviewers should reflect this perspective.

Many large CPOP reports, e.g., the seven large volumes produced by the Africa Panel, are written and reviewed with a scientific audience in mind. (Virtually everyone the team spoke with at USAID about the Africa studies commented on the sheer volume of materials that were produced and a lack of adequate time for carefully reading them.) Although there is a recognized need for shorter non-technical documents that can be easily and quickly read by non-technical audiences, especially outside of the research community, CPOP's experiences in preparing these successfully have been somewhat mixed.

CPOP rightly recognizes the desirability of making key reports available in other languages, and, in an effort to reach international audiences, several CPOP reports have been translated into other languages (e.g., French for the summaries of the Africa studies, Spanish and French for the *Contraception and Reproduction* report). However, there seems to be considerable "reinventing of the wheel" in making arrangements for translations, even within CPOP. This must be an issue faced by others NAS committees and it should be dealt with as an Academy-wide issue rather than at the committee-specific level. The National Academy Press may be able to assist with the arrangement of translation contracts.

In order for the NAS to reach a larger U.S. policy audience, whether through special briefings or by distributing reference materials, the dissemination activity must appeal to CPOP members and staff and resources must be budgeted to cover the activity. Judging from the number of Congressional briefings and efforts by CPOP to solicit Hill staff participation in panel and other meetings, interest in dissemination activities has been high among study directors. Inadequate funding, especially to cover staff time, however, is often a serious constraint. Dissemination activities need to be adequately budgeted to cover material production, distribution, and, particularly, staff costs. Preparation of summary booklets, for example, as was done for *Population Dynamics of Sub-Saharan Africa*, can require extensive staff time; however, the Africa experience suggests that it may not always be cost-effective nor result in a better product when summary efforts are turned over to another organization. Perhaps more use of the editorial services within NRC would have been useful in preparing the Africa summary materials.

## Impact

NAS/CPOP studies have had varying impacts on knowledge, determined largely by the extent of their distribution to the public and the health policy and research communities. In evaluation team interviews, *Developing New Contraceptives* was frequently cited for raising awareness of salient issues that had hitherto not been considered of great importance, notably, product liability. *Contraception and Reproduction* (C&R) contributed significantly to the knowledge base of the population community. C&R served as a springboard for many derivative products. Moreover, since its publication, every DHS II and III final report includes a table showing the percentage of women and births falling into one of the risk groups identified in the study and the corresponding neonatal, infant, and child mortality rates for births occurring to women in each of the categories. The report *Population Growth and Economic Development* made a significant contribution in showing that the relationships between population growth and economic development were not as simple and clear-cut as previously believed. *Organizing for Effective Family Planning Programs* continues to serve as a much used reference for Office of Population staff and was useful in preparing for developing the EVALUATION project.

Smaller CPOP studies, however, especially expert meeting and workshop proceedings, have suffered from weak visibility and are, consequently, not well known. The team found remarkably little awareness of the availability of the reports of such activities, which are official NRC publications and have undergone standard review procedures. The team recommends that greater effort be made to inform potential audiences of the availability of reports of workshops and expert meetings.



## LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Because of the great interest in reproductive health, CPOP is advised to publish sufficient copies of the report on the Expert Meeting on Reproductive Health to ensure that it is widely distributed within the international population and women's health communities. A special dissemination activity is warranted. (p. 11)
2. CPOP may want to consider including a highly focused question-and-answer session within the scope of a panel activity. (p. 13)
3. NAS/CPOP's comparative advantage lies in synthesizing existing research. If primary research is needed to fill gaps in the literature, other alternatives to the direct use of CPOP members or staff should be considered, for example, consultancies or institutional agreements with appropriate individuals or institutions. (p. 14)
4. AID/POP and CPOP should seriously consider the use of formats such as question-and-answer panels, letter reports, open meetings, occasional lectures or lecture series, roundtables or forums, public briefings, and white papers in the future, in some cases as a means of reaching audiences (e.g., CAs, NGOs, Congress) that currently are not as familiar as they should be with NAS/CPOP work. (p. 15)
5. Given the length of time to complete a full panel study, it is important that the questions addressed by a CPOP Panel be ones that are still likely to be of interest several years later and that this be considered in deciding which major activities to undertake. (p. 16)
6. More direction from the sponsor in formulating the research questions could help ensure that the studies are both policy relevant and useful in guiding policy action. The upcoming workshop on Fertility and Female Education could benefit from more direction from the sponsors in this regard. (p. 17)
7. Careful attention must be given in the writing of summaries and conclusions i.e., as to how these will stand on their own. (p. 18)
8. To enhance the usefulness of CPOP studies and dissemination efforts to non-academic and international audiences, NAS/CPOP should always include at least one member with a policy perspective and someone from a developing country. (In some cases, one person maybe able to fulfill both requirements.) (p. 18)
9. USAID staff, especially senior staff, should be encouraged to attend NAS/CPOP meetings. Their presence at the meeting ensures that CPOP's contributions are likely to be more fully appreciated by their intended policy audience, and sends a signal to the population research community, and the CPOP members in particular, that USAID has a keen interest in ensuring that their policies and programs are based on good science. (p. 19)
10. To further enhance communication with USAID, the CPOP study director should meet not only with the CTO, but also with other USAID senior staff after Committee meetings (and perhaps beforehand also) to brief them on relevant developments. (p. 19)

11. NAS/CPOP should explore posting announcements of all its new publications, but especially those that tend to be under-disseminated, notably, proceedings from expert meetings and workshops, on the PHN flash and other electronic bulletin boards. (p. 24)
12. Dissemination activities need to be adequately budgeted to cover materials production, distribution as well as staff costs. This has not been the case with all NAS/CPOP Panel studies. (p. 25)
13. For every major publication, there should be a short, non-technical summary that can be read quickly and comprehended by non-technical audiences. Careful consideration needs to be given to who should prepare such summaries. It is important that, together, the persons involved represent both in-depth knowledge of the subject matter and the ability to present results clearly in a crisp and interesting way to non-technical audiences. (p. 25)
14. Although the exact audiences cannot always be identified at the outset (because it is not yet clear what the main findings will be), likely potential audiences should be considered in shaping (and staffing) an activity. (p. 25)
15. NAS/CPOP work could reach a larger audience through use of additional dissemination mechanisms, such as briefings for USAID Mission staff or the general professional community, for example, in conjunction with the annual meetings of NCIH or APHA; public briefings on recent published works for members of the international population community (CAs, advocacy organizations); videotapes of briefings (for example, of presentations from the Population Dynamics in Sub-Saharan Africa conference), which, for example, could be sent to overseas field offices and embassies. (p. 25)
16. CPOP should consider issuing a periodic CPOP Newsletter, possibly every six months or once a year, noting the existence of new publications, how to obtain them (perhaps the Newsletter could include a tear-off order form), a summary of their main findings; mentioning other activities underway and other relevant Academy activities (e.g., the recent IOM study of female morbidity and mortality in Sub-Saharan Africa); and possibly reviewing older studies and their impact and continuing relevance. Such a newsletter should be sent broadly to U.S. and international researchers, policymakers, and others (including members of Congress) interested in population issues. (p. 26)
17. Other possible dissemination mechanisms to increase awareness by potential users of NAS/CPOP research (e.g., NGOs, CAs) about Committee activities could include broadening the circulation of the NAS publication Reports and Events to audiences interested in population issues and mentioning CPOP activities and reports in PAA Affairs, the APHA Newsletter and on the Internet. (p. 26)
18. Special efforts should be made to reach audiences on the Hill, e.g., members of Congress and their staffs. Collaboration with the Population Resource Center could be useful in this regard. (p. 26)
19. The Committee should prepare more journal articles that reach scientific audiences, especially different audiences. Journals such as Science should be considered for publication of findings of CPOP studies. Such journal articles provide opportunities to



reach additional scientific audiences and provide valued publication opportunities for staff (especially junior staff). (p. 26)

20. CPOP should continue to make key reports available in other languages. Arrangements for translations should be dealt with as an Academy-wide issue rather than at the committee-specific level. The National Academy Press may be able to assist with the arrangement of translation contracts. (p. 26)

21. The impact of expert meetings and workshops on population policy and program implementation could be enhanced if USAID were to consider the potential contribution of the topic to other longer-term activities included in their portfolio, and especially their policy, research and evaluation portfolios. As noted above, greater effort needs to be made to inform potential audiences of the availability of reports on such activities. (p. 28)



# **1 THE EVALUATION**

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## **1.1 Cooperative Agreements**

USAID's Office of Population has had two cooperative agreements with the National Academy of Science's Committee on Population (NAS/CPOP) over the period 1985 - 1995. Both agreements provided funding to support research on population issues of special interest to the international population community. Private donors were expected to match the USAID contribution, which was \$1.2 million for the 1985-1990 and \$2.0 million for the 1990-1995 agreements.

## **1.2 Scope of Work**

The Scope of Work (SOW) for the evaluation was to focus on how USAID might make best use of the expertise of the NAS based on the experience of the previous two cooperative agreements. Because of the rigorous internal review processes used by the NAS, the evaluation was not to address the quality of NAS/CPOP products but rather to examine their usefulness, dissemination, timeliness, cost, and appropriateness of format. This evaluation, in March 1995, was the first ever for USAID's grant to NAS/CPOP and was requested specifically to provide guidance for the design of a new grant to the Committee. (See Appendix A for the SOW for the evaluation.)

## **1.3 The Evaluation Team**

The evaluation was conducted over the period March 8 - 31, 1995, by Dr. Julie DaVanzo, Director of the Family in Economic Development Center at RAND, and Ms. Barbara Seligman, Senior Research Scientist, The Futures Group International. Dr. DaVanzo, an economic demographer, was a member of the Committee on Population from 1986 to 1991 and was co-chair of the Working Group on the Health Consequences of Contraceptive Use and Controlled Fertility. Ms. Seligman, whose background is in public policy, worked in the Office of Population's Policy and Evaluation Division for three years and has extensive experience working to advance the implementation of population policies under other USAID funded projects. DaVanzo and Seligman provided the complementary skills and experience needed to complete the evaluation scope of work.

## **1.4 Evaluation Methodology**

To collect information for this evaluation, the evaluators relied on face-to-face and telephone interviews, review of printed materials, including a comprehensive Briefing Book prepared by NAS/CPOP, and administrative records. Dr. DaVanzo and Ms. Seligman worked together in Washington, D.C. during the period March 8-15, during which time they conducted most of their interviews. They met with or contacted by telephone individuals from the following organizations: USAID Center for Population, Health, and Nutrition; USAID Africa Bureau; USAID Program and Policy Coordination Bureau; the State Department; NAS/CBASSE;

NAS/CPOP Committee members and staff; and selected foundations and population education organizations. (See Appendix B for a complete list of individuals contacted.)

The evaluators developed a questionnaire, based on the evaluation's scope of work, which they used as a guide for conducting structured interviews. Responsibility for preparation of the evaluation report was divided between the team members, who coordinated their efforts using electronic mail, fax, and telephone. NAS/CPOP staff were especially helpful in providing financial and other resource materials to the evaluation team.

## 2 THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ITS COMMITTEE ON POPULATION

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### 2.1 The National Academy of Sciences

#### 2.1.1 *History and Mandate of the NAS*

The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) was established by President Abraham Lincoln in 1863 to provide objective, scientific advice to the nation. It is a private, non-profit society of distinguished scholars. The National Academy of Engineering (NAE) and the Institute of Medicine (IOM) were established subsequently, as organizations parallel to NAS, to provide engineering advice and to protect and advance the public health. The National Research Council (NRC) was established in 1916 and is currently the principal operating agency of the NAS, NAE, and IOM. Most activities of the NRC are undertaken at the request of federal agencies and funded by them, or mandated by the U.S. Congress. Private industry, foundations, and state and local governments also sponsor activities.

The NAS/NRC prides itself on its independence and objectivity. Committees deliberate in an environment independent of government, sponsors, and special interest groups. Sponsors may attend open meetings, but meetings during which the committee deliberates on findings and develops recommendations are closed. Formal, anonymous review of the final product by experts who were not members of the authoring committee assures objectivity and scientific quality. Sponsors have no role in the review process and may not be informed of a committee's findings or recommendations until the review of the report is completed.

#### 2.1.2 *Structure of the NAS and the NRC*

NRC Committees. In a typical year, about 645 NRC committees address questions embracing virtually every aspect of society. One of these is the Committee on Population (CPOP), which is the subject of this evaluation and whose structure and activities are summarized below. Members of all NRC committees serve as volunteers and receive no compensation beyond their actual expenses. They are assisted by staff who are employees of the NRC.

NRC Commissions and Boards. The NRC consists of a number of different commissions, boards, and offices that provide oversight from the initial approval through the final report of every project. CPOP is part of the Division of Social and Economic Studies, which is part of the Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education (CBASSE). The Division is directed by Ms. Faith Mitchell; CBASSE is under the leadership of Ms. Barbara Torrey. Both Mitchell and Torrey have long been associated with the population field and have an in-depth knowledge of demographic issues and extensive contacts within the field. Torrey was, herself, a member of CPOP and has been director of the Center for International Research of the Census Bureau and was president of the Population Reference Bureau. Mitchell was the Senior Population Officer for the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and was recently the Senior Population Coordinator in the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration at the State Department.

Units of the NAS Infrastructure that Assist with Publications and Dissemination. Any document, however brief, incorporating the advice or findings of an NRC group and intended for distribution outside the institution is considered an NRC report and is reviewed by a group other than its authors. The NRC infrastructure includes several offices that specialize in assisting with the review, preparation, and dissemination of NRC reports. The NRC Report Review Committee (RRC) oversees the review process. The procedures followed vary with the character of the manuscript. In some instances, for example for most reports of workshops, the RRC may assign its review duties to the major NRC unit (e.g., CBASSE) overseeing the project. In other cases, such as with full-length consensus study reports, the RRC works together with the NRC unit and appoints a monitor to coordinate the review process, and the reviewers remain anonymous. The monitor determines whether the authors have been responsive to the reviewers' comments in revising the report. Any self-standing summary or other compendium based on a committee's work must also be reviewed.

The National Academy Press (NAP) has the right of first refusal for any NAS publication. NAP's principal advantage is its speed, which is far faster than commercial publishers or journals. While NAP markets selected reports to a wide audience and more than 200 libraries have standing orders for NAS publications, experience has shown that sometimes an outside publisher may be more effective in reaching a specialized audience. Ms. Eugenia Grohman, Associate Director for Reports, pointed to the decision by the Population and Development Review (PDR) to publish as a supplement the proceedings of the NAS/CPOP workshop, 'Expanding Frameworks for Fertility Research,' as a recent example. All NAS publications currently in print are available for sale from NAP.

The NRC Office of News and Public Information (ONPI) has a staff of 13 professionals who help committees communicate with the news media and the public and reach other intended audiences. ONPI helps plan the dissemination of reports; write news releases, op-ed pieces, magazine articles, and other materials; organize press releases, news conferences, press briefings, and public briefings; and respond to inquiries from the news media.. The National Academy Op-Ed Service is a nationally syndicated weekly service that provides several hundred daily newspapers with opinion articles, typically bylined by the chairperson of an NRC committee or panel. News conferences are organized for reports of significant news value and general interest and are open to all reporters and all interested parties. Press briefings are gatherings of reporters in a smaller, more informal setting. Public briefings are sessions open to the general public that also serve as potential news fora. ONPI also arranges special briefings, prepares speeches, works with the broadcast media, and can assist with the development of charts, graphics, and video news releases.

ONPI issues a free monthly newsletter for reporters, *Reports and Events*, advising of upcoming reports, conferences, meetings, and other activities of possible news interest. Listings of upcoming reports generally summarize the background of each study. ONPI also issues a quarterly magazine that is available through subscription, *NewsReport*, which highlights the findings of recent reports and conferences and lists recent publications, new projects and upcoming open meetings. *NewsReport* is sent free of charge to NAS/NAE/IOM members, committee members and staff, reporters, members of Congress, and a substantial outside audience.

NAS's Office of External Affairs keeps apprised of Congressional hearings and facilitates liaison between relevant NAS Committees and appropriate Hill staff.

### 2.1.3 Types of Activities Undertaken by the NRC

NRC activities are initiated in a variety of ways, take many different forms, and result in many different types of end products. Some projects are initiated through sponsor request, while others emanate from the interests of the committee members; often a project results from a combination of these. All projects must be approved by the executive committee of the Research Council's Governing Board, which evaluates whether the activity is an appropriate one for the NRC. If a project involves the formation of a committee, panel, or working group, formal procedures attempt to assure that the group has the appropriate expertise and is balanced and free from conflict of interest; all members must be approved by the Research Council chair.

The most common type of NRC study is a consensus report issued by a committee of the NRC. For such a study, the committee may set up a panel or working group,<sup>1</sup> which typically meets 3-5 times over a period of 18-36 months, and makes an in-depth assessment of an issue. A panel or working group can commission papers, hold expert meetings and workshops (see below), and set up sub-panels or working groups of its own. Usually at least one member of the panel or working group is also a member of the parent committee. Members of panels or working groups are approved by the parent committee, by CBASSE, and by the Governing Board of the NRC.

Conclusions and recommendations of a panel or working group are reached through consensus. Where there is significant disagreement among members about significant issues, this is noted in the report; occasionally dissenting statements have been published along with the majority report of the Panel or Committee. A consensus report undergoes rigorous, anonymous review by a group of independent experts before it is approved and released to the public. If an activity is co-sponsored by another unit of the NRC/NAS or IOM (for example, the contraceptive development panel was jointly sponsored by CPOP and IOM), members of that unit also review the draft concurrently.

When background papers have been commissioned for a study, a volume of background papers is sometimes published, either by the NAP or an outside publisher. Summaries of reports have also been published as articles in peer-reviewed scientific journals. Conferences are sometimes held to disseminate the results of a major study; presentations at professional meetings, public briefings, and press briefings are also used to reach scientific audiences and the media.

When advice is urgently needed to meet a pressing deadline, a major study can be fast-tracked and completed in as little as two to three months. A variant of this approach has been used by the Committee on International Nutrition (CIN). CIN has held two-day question-and-answer panel discussions for which it has received the specific questions that the sponsor

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<sup>1</sup> Terminology differs for groups appointed by CPOP. For example, the CPOP *Contraception and Reproduction* report was prepared by the **Working Group** on the Health Consequences of Contraceptive Use and Controlled Fertility. The report, *Developing New Contraceptives: Obstacles and Opportunities*, was report was prepared by the **Committee** on Contraceptive Development. The Africa studies were overseen by the **Panel** on Population Dynamics in Sub-Saharan Africa, which prepared one of the reports and set up six **working groups** that conducted the other studies.

would like reviewed two weeks in advance. CIN invites the sponsor to participate in the first day of the meeting to review the questions; the second-day session is closed. The Committee prepares a consensus report responding to the questions, which is subject to full NRC review. The report is released two to three months after the question-and-answer panel. (Originally, CIN was asked to produce reports within two months of the committee meeting. Such fast turn-around is often not realistic. A three month "fast-track", however, seems to be far more feasible.) The RRC requires three weeks to produce a review. This approach requires close coordination among the sponsor, committee permanent staff, and committee chair and requires intensive input of their time during the period of time between the initial framing of the questions and the issuing of the report. (See Appendix C for more information concerning CIN's question-and-answer panels.)

Another approach often used for more discrete topics is to organize one or more workshops on an issue. The committee might appoint a working group or subcommittee, occasionally with outside members, to oversee the planning of the workshop. Papers are commissioned and discussed at the workshop. Participants in workshops do not have to be approved by CBASSE or the Governing Board. A volume of workshop papers, containing an introduction and summary of remarks by discussants and other participants, is usually published. No attempt is made to reach consensus on a full set of recommendations. Responsibility for review of reports of workshops is typically handled by the major NRC unit (e.g., CBASSE) overseeing the project.

For topics that are either narrowly defined, or more speculative, or those on which a committee is considering a major effort and wants outside input, an expert meeting can be held. Participants are usually asked to send a 5-10 page memo or previous publications summarizing their views and ideas. Participants in expert meetings do not have to be approved by CBASSE or the Governing Board. Reports may be issued on expert meetings (which may or may not include the briefing memos). Responsibility for review of reports of expert meetings is typically assigned by the RRC to the major unit involved, in this case, CBASSE.

Committees can sponsor planning meetings, to which experts are invited to give advice on the usefulness of different approaches and the major issues that ought to be addressed. Sometimes a report of a planning meeting is issued (and undergoes the NRC review procedures), but, more typically, an internal memorandum is prepared. Participants in planning meetings do not have to be approved by CBASSE or the Governing Board.

A committee can issue a letter report in response to a request from an agency. Letter reports are supposed to give the reader sufficient information on the basis for conclusions and recommendations, but not necessarily with all the supporting evidence and arguments. All members of the committee or panel sign the letter report, which is then subject to the full multi-level review process.

Some committees have held open meetings to facilitate exchange of information, without seeking consensus on specific recommendations. For example, the Committee on National Statistics and the Institute of Medicine sponsored a National Forum on Health Statistics.

Some NRC units have sponsored occasional lectures or lecture series and some have organized roundtables or forums, where parties with disparate interests and views can air their



differences. These roundtables or forums do not make policy recommendations, but sometimes prepare reports outlining problems and options for solving them. Some of these are public briefings, which are open to the general public.

Some NRC units have prepared white papers, typically drawing on results of several panel studies. White papers also undergo standard NRC review.

The NRC is responsible for the major public distribution of its reports; sponsors may assist in developing a dissemination plan. The NRC Office of News and Public Information (ONPI), which was discussed above, helps committees communicate the findings of their studies to the news media and the public.

## **2.2 The NAS Committee on Population**

### *2.2.1 History, Structure, Membership, and Staffing of the Committee on Population*

The Committee on Population (CPOP) was established as a standing committee of the NAS in 1983 to bring the knowledge and methods of the population sciences to bear on major issues of science and public policy. (From the late 1970s through 1983, the Committee on Population and Demography conducted a number of key demographic studies, but was not a standing committee of the Academy.) As with the rest of NAS, scholars who are members of CPOP, or participate in the panels, workshops and expert meetings that it organizes, serve as volunteers, donating their time without compensation. Committee members are chosen for their particular expertise (with respect to activities already underway and/or to those that the Committee would like to undertake in the near future) and with regard to appropriate balance. From its inception, CPOP members have represented a variety of disciplinary perspectives, including demography, sociology, economics, anthropology, public health, medicine, and statistics, and have brought expertise on a wide range of population-related topics and on nearly all parts of the world. CPOP members serve three-year terms. Some members are renewed for a second term (especially when they are participating in a major ongoing activity), but they must then rotate off the committee.

The Committee on Population currently consists of 14 members (listed in Appendix D) and is chaired by Professor Ronald D. Lee, of the University of California. Other persons who have served on CPOP since 1983 are listed in Appendix E. The Committee is supported by a staff of 8 NRC employees (two of whom work part-time), which, since December 1993, has been directed by Dr. John G. Haaga. Previous CPOP study directors have been Robert Lapham (through 1984), Peter J. Donaldson (1985-1989), and Linda G. Martin (1989-1993).

Since its inception, CPOP has been very fortunate to have distinguished and hard-working chairpersons and members of committees, panels, and working groups and excellent study directors and capable and dedicated staff. All NAS staff with whom the evaluation team spoke noted that CPOP members were among the most dedicated in the Academy, and that CPOP staff were also regarded as being of the highest caliber.

CPOP coordination and cooperation with other NRC committees and with the IOM has generally been very good. Sometimes the collaboration is formal (for example, the contraceptive development study was jointly conducted with IOM), but this doubles the amount

of bureaucracy and review. Generally there is excellent informal coordination and cooperation among committees, for example in suggesting appropriate participants or reviewers. As an illustration, the staff of the Commission on Geosciences, Environment, and Resources helped CPOP with the planning of the workshop on population and land use. As another example, CPOP recommended a demographer who has participated in the IOM group that recently completed a study of maternal morbidity and mortality in Sub-Saharan Africa. Coordination of activities across committees and boards is facilitated by weekly meeting of all CBASSE senior staff and monthly meetings with IOM senior staff.

## 2.2.2 CPOP Funding

Since 1985, the NAS Committee of Population has been supported in part by two cooperative agreements from the USAID Office of Population. Over this same period, CPOP has also received support from other government and private sources.

The value of the 1985-1990 cooperative agreement with USAID/S&T/POP was \$1,250,000. Over this same period CPOP also received a total of \$1,225,000 of support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation (\$400,000), the Mellon Foundation (\$625,000), and the Rockefeller Foundation (\$200,000). Hewlett and Mellon have tended to provide more general institutional support while Rockefeller grants have typically been made to fund specific projects. The general support has been used to cover dissemination and travel expenses; in some cases, salaries may be covered. The Rockefeller grant supported preparation of background papers for the panel study report, *Contraception and Reproduction*. The background papers were published by the NAS in a companion volume, *Contraceptive Use and Controlled Fertility*.

The value of the 1990-1995 cooperative agreement with USAID/R&D/POP was \$2,050,000, which includes funds that were directly transferred from the Africa Bureau to R&D/POP to support the Population Dynamics in Sub-Saharan Africa series. During this same period CPOP also received a total of \$1,217,817 for the international population activities reviewed in this report: \$90,887 from the USAID Bureau of Policy and Program Coordination (PPC) and \$1,126,930 from foundations including the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, (\$300,000), the Mellon Foundation (\$746,500), and the Rockefeller Foundation (\$80,430) (please note that these estimates apply only to NAS/CPPOP's portfolio of international activities). CPOP also received \$307,000 from the USAID Office of Health (R&D/H), and \$400,000 from the USAID Africa Bureau (AFR/ARTS) for activities in child survival, health policy, and social and behavioral factors related to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, under a separate cooperative agreement not included in the scope of this evaluation.

Hence, each cooperative agreement has been leveraged significantly by matching funds from other sources for international population activities (98 percent and 89 percent respectively, for non-PHN/POP sources). The first agreement was leveraged exclusively by private funds. For the second agreement, 38 percent of the matching funds came from other USAID sources (Office of Health and the Africa Bureau).

### 2.2.3 Main Activities Conducted Under the 1985-90 Cooperative Agreement

Working Group on the Health Consequences of Contraceptive Use and Controlled Fertility (William Foege, chair; Julie DaVanzo, co-chair). This working group issued the report *Contraception and Reproduction: Health Consequences for Women and Children in the Developing World* published by the National Academy Press in 1989. The report has been translated into Spanish and issued by Editorial Medica Panamericana and into French and issued by Editions-Librairie Economica. A journal article summarizing the report was published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* in 1991. A volume of related working papers, *Contraceptive Use and Controlled Fertility*, was published by the National Academy Press in 1989.

Committee on Contraceptive Development (Luigi Mastroianni, chair). This committee issued the report *Developing New Contraceptives: Obstacles and Opportunities*, published by the National Academy Press in 1990. A journal article summarizing this report was published in *The New England Journal of Medicine* in 1990.

Conference on Demographic and Programmatic and Programmatic Consequences of Contraceptive Innovations. This conference, sponsored by CPOP, was held on October 6 and 7, 1988. The papers from this conference were published in a volume entitled *Demographic and Programmatic Consequences of Contraceptive Innovations*, by Plenum Press in 1990.

Workshop on Microcomputer Software for Population and Development Planning. The report from this workshop, entitled *Microcomputer Software for Population and Development Planning* is available from CPOP for no charge.

Working Group on Family Planning Program Effectiveness (George Simmons, Chair). The publication produced by this working group, *Organizing for Family Planning Program Effectiveness*, issued by the NAS in 1987, has been in high demand and was recently reprinted. Key findings from the studies were presented at a conference where findings from the Working Group on Population Growth and Economic Development were also disseminated.

Working Group on Population Growth and Economic Development (D. Gale Johnson and Ronald Lee, Co-Chairs). This working group produced the volume, *Population Growth and Economic Development*, which was published by the University of Wisconsin Press. A policy-oriented synthesis of the volume, *Population and Economic Development: Policy Questions*, was published by the NAP in 1986 and is still widely used within USAID. As mentioned above, a conference was held in which the key findings of the working group were presented to an audience that included many staff members of the Congressional Caucus on Population and Development.

Expert Meeting on Urbanization and Migration. The proceedings of this meeting which was held in 1990 were later published by Sage in the book, *Third World Cities*, edited by John Kasarda and Allan Parnell.

Fertility and Mortality Trends in Indonesia. This last volume in the series reviewing demographic estimates for countries in North Africa, Asia and the Latin American and

Caribbean region was published during the 1985-90 agreement by the East-West Population Institute. This study was begun as part of the Committee on Population and Demography's review of fertility trends in Latin America, Asia and North Africa. The study was released in 1987.

Other activities also conducted under the agreement included special briefings on international population issues by NAS/CPOP Study Director Donaldson to the USAID administrator, assistant administrator, and other senior staff, participation in selected open CPOP meetings by Congressman Sander Levin of Michigan, and at least one briefing for Congressional staff on issues in America's population-related foreign assistance by Dr. Donaldson.

#### *2.2.4 Main Activities Conducted Under the 1990-95 Cooperative Agreement*

Panel on Population Dynamics in Sub-Saharan Africa (Kenneth Hill, Chair). This panel divided itself into six working groups to address the following topics:

- Social dynamics of adolescent fertility in Sub-Saharan Africa (Caroline Bledsoe, Chair)
- Effects of child survival and general health programs on mortality (Douglas Ewbank, Chair)
- Factors affecting contraceptive use (Jane Bertrand, Chair)
- Demographic effects of economic and social reversals in Sub-Saharan Africa (Kenneth Hill, Chair)
- Demographic change in Sub-Saharan Africa (Kenneth Hill, Chair)
- Working group on Kenya (William Brass, Chair)
- Working group on Senegal (Gilles Pison, Chair)

A two-day conference on population dynamics in Sub-Saharan Africa, sponsored by CPOP, was held in Washington, on August 19 and 20, 1993. The conference presented the principal findings and recommendations of the Panel on Population Dynamics in Sub-Saharan Africa and its working groups. Each of the working groups but the last issued a report for the conference. The report of the seventh working group, *Population Dynamics in Senegal*, is due in May 1995.

A special briefing session was held before the conference for members of the USAID Africa Bureau. A summary document containing executive summaries from each of the reports was made available to conference participants along with the actual reports. In addition, a non-technical summary of the six reports, entitled *The Population Dynamics of Sub-Saharan Africa*, was prepared by NAS/CPOP with financial and administrative support from the HHRAA project and issued in May 1994.

Panel on Reproductive Health (Amy Tsui and Judith Wasserheit, co-chairs). This panel has met twice and is scheduled to convene twice more. A publication of the Panel's findings and recommendations is scheduled to be available in June 1996. The panel convened an expert meeting in January 1995 to explore two topics: (1) the advantages and disadvantages of different types of interventions used to address reproductive health problems; and (2) cultural and gender determinants of reproductive health outcomes. The draft report of the expert

meeting will go to review in April, 1995, but published copies are not expected before July, 1995.

**Recommendation No. 1:**     **Because of the great interest in reproductive health, CPOP is advised to publish sufficient copies of the report on the Expert Meeting on Reproductive Health to ensure that it is widely distributed within the international population and women's health communities. A special dissemination activity is warranted.**

Workshop on Population and Land Use, December 1991 (Barbara Torrey, Chair). The report from this workshop, entitled *Population and Land Use*, was published by NAP in 1993. It includes an introductory chapter and eight of the papers that were presented at the workshop.

Expert Meeting on Accessibility of Family Planning Services in Developing Countries, January 1991 (Al Hermalin, Chair). The report from this meeting is available from the Committee for no charge.

Expert Meeting on Family and Development (July 17-18, 1992). The report from this meeting was issued in 1993 and is available from the Committee for no charge.

Expert Meeting on Information Systems and Measurements for Assessing Program Effects, September 9-10, 1993 (Amy Tsui, Chair). The report from this meeting is available from the Committee for no charge.

Expert Meeting on Resource Allocation and Family Planning Programs, July 21, 1994. The report from this meeting is being finalized and will be submitted for journal publication.

Other presentations include:

- Testimony reviewing availability and quality of global reproductive data by John Haaga for the U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, Sub-Committee on Census, Statistics, and Postal Personnel; published in *Roll Call*. (August 1994).
- Exploratory meeting on evidence of fertility decline in Bangladesh organized and hosted by CPOP in July, 1994, chaired by Ken Hill, bringing together a small group of experts, including participants from USAID and the World Bank, to assess recent DHS and census results and plan follow-up activities.
- Participation in "Beyond the Numbers" panel, sponsored by the Turner Foundation and officiated by Vice President Gore, held at the Academy.
- A workshop on mortality and reproductive change is scheduled for late 1995 and a workshop on female education and fertility is scheduled for early 1996.



## THE EVALUATION

### 3.1 Types of Activities Undertaken by CPOP

#### 3.1.1 *Activities in Which CPOP Has a Comparative Advantage*

CPOP's unique strengths lie primarily in its political neutrality, which is upheld through the NAS's rigorous reviews of draft reports, the composition of its committees, panels, and working groups, the attendant prestige of the NAS, and the multidisciplinary and multi-institutional composition of CPOP and the groups it assembles to address the issues it studies. CPOP is especially well positioned to prepare syntheses of existing research, as it did with *Contraception and Reproduction*. The scientific rigor of NAS reports ensures them a special place in any scholar's or population policy maker's library. An NAS study carries considerable weight among the research and policy-making community in the United States. It is not clear whether a study of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences carries the same weight with international audiences, especially LDC policymakers.

These benefits are not without their costs. One cost of scientific rigor is time. NAS Panel studies typically take 18-36 months before they are published. While other accelerated options are available (see Appendix C for a description of CIN's question-and-answer session model), they are only appropriate for examining narrow, technical questions. For broader inquiry, for example, as planned for the Reproductive Health (RH) Panel, NAS/CPOP's advantage over other CAs lies in the neutrality and scientific objectivity it brings to issues and the extent of deliberation with which the issues are approached, especially for issues that are often discussed in political terms (e.g., promotion of reproductive rights). The multidisciplinary composition of the RH Panel and the top-notch scientific credentials of the experts who are willing to participate because of the prestige of the Academy means that the weight of its consensus-based conclusions and recommendations will be widely respected. No other CA could fill the role of the Committee for such a study.<sup>2</sup>

It would be inappropriate to ask a panel such as the RH Panel to consider a large set of questions for which answers are needed immediately. Recognizing that 18-24 months is a long time to wait for answers to urgent policy questions, CPOP may want to consider including a highly focused question-and-answer session in the workscope of a Panel session. Such an arrangement would allow policymakers to get more timely responses— within a period of three months— to key technical questions related to the broader Panel study.

**Recommendation No. 2: CPOP may want to consider including a highly focused question-and-answer session within the scope of a panel activity.**

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<sup>2</sup> Several CPOP members noted that the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP), the main international association of population researchers, also assembles multidisciplinary working groups to address particular topics. However, the feeling was that IUSSP reports are not nearly as highly regarded as NRC reports and that, furthermore, they typically take considerably longer to come to fruition. Furthermore, NRC work was felt to be more deliberate, more thoughtful, and to make more effort to be policy relevant.

Another price of the Academy's scientific rigor is that conclusions are often not clear cut, but rather are often highly qualified, sometimes to such a degree that the sponsor may not find them to be particularly useful.

Because of the voluntary participation of the members, the Committee is not as well suited to conducting original research as it is to doing syntheses of existing research. Occasionally, when gaps emerge over the course of CPOP's synthesizing, some further data analysis may be warranted. It is not clear that data analysis is the best use of CPOP staff resources. CPOP has used a variety of mechanisms as alternatives to using staff to conduct data analysis, including commissioning papers, consultancies, and subcontracts. CPOP should consider greater reliance on these alternative mechanisms for producing data analysis in the future.

**Recommendation No. 3: NAS/CPOP's comparative advantage lies in synthesizing existing research. If primary research is needed to fill gaps in the literature, other alternatives to the direct use of CPOP members or staff should be considered, for example, consultancies or institutional agreements with appropriate individuals or institutions.**

### *3.1.2 NAS Activity Formats*

As shown in sections 2.1.3 and 2.2.2. above, NRC activities can take many different formats, and CPOP has used some, but not all, of them. They differ in the amount of time that they require to undertake, in their cost, in the rigor of the report review process, and in such aspects as whether or not they attempt to reach a consensus regarding conclusions and recommendations, or whether or not the participants must be approved by the Governing Board. However, it is important to note that all reports issued by the NRC undergo review for scientific quality.

A panel or working group is appropriate for an important question that requires an in-depth assessment and for which consensus conclusions and recommendations are desirable. A CPOP panel or working group typically needs to meet four or five times—it usually takes this long for the group dynamics to work themselves out, especially when the group includes people from a variety of disciplines—and it takes between two and three years for their report to be issued. Such an activity on an international topic costs around \$700,000; this is the estimated cost of CPOP's Reproductive Health Panel. Although no specific dissemination plan has yet been developed for the Panel, the \$700,000 estimate includes 600-700 copies of the publication for free distribution and the cost of a one-day seminar involving mostly U.S.-based invitees. Invitees from CAs and most other non-developing country institutions are asked to pay for their participation. (A \$100 fee was charged for participation in the Conference on the Population Dynamics of Sub Saharan Africa.) The fee covers the costs of the publications. International projects are intrinsically more expensive because of the travel costs involved in bringing together people from different countries.



Panel or working group activities are likely to have their greatest impact and are most likely to reach a greater proportion of the potentially interested audiences when their results are disseminated in a variety of ways—not only through the official NRC report, but also through conferences; interesting, non-technical summaries; press releases and op-ed pieces; and journal articles. Such ‘derivative products’ are not costless to prepare, and it is important that they be anticipated and that adequate funds are set aside for their preparation. These issues are discussed in more detail below.

An expert meeting can be used to address important policy questions of fairly immediate interest. Expert meetings are appropriate for topics that are either narrowly defined, or more speculative than those addressed by, say, a panel, and for which a consensus opinion is not needed. An expert meeting may also be called when the Committee is considering a major effort and wants outside input to assist in the evaluation of whether a major effort should be undertaken. An expert meeting, such as that recently held by CPOP on resource allocation issues, costs around \$90,000.

A workshop is a format that is somewhat more expensive and the corresponding report typically takes somewhat longer to issue than an expert meeting report, but a workshop is considerably less expensive and less time consuming than a panel or working group. Workshops are useful for addressing the information needs of researchers and policymakers and are appropriate for consideration of discrete topics for which there is no attempt to reach consensus on a full set of recommendations. The average cost of a workshop, such as the one CPOP is planning on infant and child mortality decline and reproductive change, is around \$150,000.

CPOP generally has not used some of the other formats described above in section 2.1.3, such as question-and-answer panels, letter reports, open meetings, occasional lectures or lecture series, roundtables or forums, public briefings, and white papers.

**Recommendation No. 4: AID/POP and CPOP should seriously consider the use of formats such as question-and-answer panels, letter reports, open meetings, occasional lectures or lecture series, roundtables or forums, public briefings, and white papers in the future, in some cases as a means of reaching audiences (e.g., CAs, NGOs, Congress) that currently are not as familiar as they should be with NAS/CPOP work.**

Although the financial cost of a full-scale NRC panel study is relatively high, the total value of the inputs to the activity is considerably higher, given the considerable amount of time that committee and panel members volunteer to CPOP activities free of charge. Furthermore, the USAID/POP support for the activity is leveraged by the contributions of other donors. Hence, the evaluation team feels that the cooperative agreement with NAS/CPOP is a very good deal for USAID/POP. NAS is a top-notch organization, and the CPOP work raises consciousness of population issues and provides scientific legitimization for some of the key premises underlying USAID/POP activities in ways that no other CA could.

### 3.2 Selection of Topics, Participants, and Formats

#### 3.2.1 *Selection of Research Agenda, Specific Questions, and Formats*

The research agenda of CPOP and the specific questions that it addresses are decided through a deliberative process that involves the sponsoring agencies, CPOP staff, and CPOP members. Typically USAID/POP staff and CPOP staff meet before a CPOP meeting (and before the drafting of a cooperative agreement) to discuss USAID/POP topics of interest and which of these would be appropriate for CPOP to consider; sometimes USAID/POP solicits ideas from USAID missions as part of this process. Ideas for studies are also suggested by Committee members or staff. Each idea is presented at the CPOP meeting, usually accompanied by a brief write-up in the agenda book. The ideas are typically discussed at length at the committee meeting, with careful consideration of whether the topic is appropriate for an NRC activity, whether CPOP members and staff have the appropriate expertise either to address the issue or to assemble a panel or working group to do so, whether sufficient evidence or data exist that warrant a systematic assessment, and whether additional funding is likely to be secured if it is not already available. (Appendix F includes a description of how the NAS/CPOP came to undertake the panel study on reproductive health.)

CPOP has generally been conservative in deciding which questions to address and has not taken on questions that are inappropriate for an NAS effort or beyond its expertise or capacity. However, it has sometimes been the case that the need for answers to those questions is not as pressing by the time a study is completed as it was when the study was designed.

**Recommendation No. 5:     Given the length of time to complete a full panel study, it is important that the questions addressed by a CPOP Panel be ones that are still likely to be of interest several years later and that this be considered in deciding which major activities to undertake.**

If an idea passes these basic tests, the question of appropriate format is also discussed. Key issues here regard the timeliness of the need for an answer, the extent of knowledge already available, the degree of controversy surrounding the issue, and, of course, budget. Committee members and staff also discuss whether the committee and staff would be stretched too thin by undertaking another major activity. Often ideas are discussed at one meeting and then deferred, pending the collection of additional information, for discussion at a subsequent meeting. It is not unusual for an idea to be on the agenda at three or four consecutive meetings. Sometimes the Committee decides to have an expert meeting so that outside experts can contribute additional information and assist in making an informed decision about whether the Committee should undertake a major activity. For example, such expert meetings were convened prior to forming of the health consequences, Africa, and reproductive health panels.

NAS/CPOP studies typically have their greatest impact when they satisfy two conditions: (1) they address questions of current policy importance; and (2) they have clear conclusions and

recommendations. To a great extent, the formulation of the research question(s) is decisive in determining whether these two conditions will be satisfied. Although the two conditions are not always compatible, they have been satisfied by a number of NAS/CPOP studies, for example *Factors Affecting Contraceptive Use in Sub-Saharan Africa*. In some cases, more direction from the sponsor in formulating the research questions could help ensure that both conditions are satisfied. The upcoming workshop on Fertility and Female Education is one such example.

**Recommendation No. 6: More direction from the sponsor in formulating the research questions could help ensure that the studies are both policy relevant and useful in guiding policy action. The upcoming workshop on Fertility and Female Education could benefit from more direction from the sponsors in this regard.**

In other cases, it may be worthwhile to combine highly focused programmatic questions in the workscope within a Panel activity that is undertaking a broader synthesis. For example, the Reproductive Health Panel might be asked to conduct a Question-and-Answer session on a narrow technical issues, say, Risk Assessment for IUD Users with Gynecological Conditions. By structuring a Q&A session into the Panel's work, the sponsor would be able to get a consensus and reviewed response within a time frame of three months. The Q&A session would most likely extend the period of the Panel study, say from 18 to 21 or 22 months in the case of the Reproductive Health Panel.

### *3.2.2 Selection of Participants*

Once the Committee decides to undertake an activity, it then discusses the participants. Careful effort is made to represent different subareas of expertise (both with regard to the topic and the geographic areas being covered), different points of view, and different disciplinary approaches. The sponsor often suggests types of people it would like to see involved. The prestige of the Academy helps entice many top-of-their-field experts to participate in NRC activities. For major activities on which a consensus must be reached, efforts are made not to include individuals who are closed-minded, are immutable in their convictions, or might have a conflict of interest. For such major activities, the participants must be approved by the NRC Governing Board. Similar procedures are used to recommend new members of the Committee.

Since its inception, CPOP has been very fortunate to have distinguished and hard-working chairpersons and members of committees, panels, and working groups; excellent study directors; and capable and dedicated staff. CPOP members typically devote considerably more time to NRC activities than members of other NAS/NRC standing committees and boards. High-level staff within the Academy view CPOP as one of their best committees.

Over the years, the CPOP has had a strong academic/research orientation. This has shaped the questions that it has addressed and the formats that it has used. Because of this orientation, the committee has perhaps not fully exploited opportunities to make its end products as useful and broadly known to policy makers, NGOs, and CAs as they could be.

Furthermore, it is important that the Committee recognize the way in which non-researcher audiences may read the reports. For example, they may focus on the summary and conclusions, without reading the entire body of the report. It would be useful for one participant and one reviewer to represent the perspective (though not necessarily point of view) of the typical USAID or CA reader. For example, although the PGED summary report was reviewed by top experts in the field, including a Nobel Prize winner, none of the reviewers probably read the report in the way that many of the readers would (e.g., with more attention to the conclusions and recommendations than to the detailed science).

**Recommendation No. 7: Careful attention must be given in the writing of summaries and conclusions i.e., as to how these will stand on their own.**

Some members and staff observed that the multidisciplinary character of the Committee has evolved over time. A criticism of the PGED study was the narrowness of its (economic) approach, a likely reflection of inadequate disciplinary diversity among the Committee and Working Group members at the time; all working group members but one (Bulatao) were trained as economists and most of their work was microeconomic in nature. In retrospect, a number of the people with whom the team spoke felt that PGED would have benefited from having a resource economist, an ecologist, and a person from a developing country on the working group and having such expertise represented among the reviewers as well. However, others, such as Sam Preston, felt that PGED was one of the CPOP activities that had gone really well, in large measure because ‘the right people were involved.’

However, the present membership of CPOP may be less diverse than in the recent past. The present Committee does not include members from developing countries or from policy-making institutions, with the exception of Dr. Bobadilla who is presently with the World Bank in Washington. A number of interviewees indicated that previous efforts to involve such individuals had met with mixed success: meeting attendance was spotty and, in some cases, participants who are more active in policy than research have had difficulty keeping up with technical discussions. Nonetheless, the potential contributions of such individuals are great and it should be worth the effort of trying to find appropriate persons with this type of background. Six percent of the expert volunteers who serve on NAS committees come from government at all levels, so that appointing one person to CPOP who has primarily a policy perspective would seem reasonable.<sup>3</sup>

**Recommendation No. 8: To enhance the usefulness of CPOP studies and dissemination efforts to non-academic and international audiences, NAS/CPOP should always include at least one member with a policy perspective and someone from a developing country. (In some cases, one person maybe able to fulfill both requirements.)**

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<sup>3</sup> [NAS, 1994, p.3]

Staff of sponsoring agencies are welcome at all open meetings of the Committee. Typically the USAID CTO attends the Committee meetings, but attendance by other USAID staff has often been disappointing.

**Recommendation No. 9:** USAID staff, especially senior staff, should be encouraged to attend NAS/CPOP meetings. Their presence at the meeting ensures that CPOP's contributions are likely to be more fully appreciated by their intended policy audience, and sends a signal to the population research community, and the CPOP members in particular, that USAID has a keen interest in ensuring that their policies and programs are based on good science.

**Recommendation No. 10:** To further enhance communication with USAID, the CPOP study director should meet not only with the CTO, but also with other USAID senior staff after Committee meetings (and perhaps beforehand also) to brief them on relevant developments.

### **3.3 Audience, Dissemination and Impact**

#### *3.3.1 Audience Perceived by USAID*

NAS/CPOP's work is (or should be) addressed to multiple audiences. The relative importance of one audience over another depends on the subject and format of the research project, and the person with whom one speaks. All interviewed agree that the principal sponsor, USAID's Office of Population, is always a primary audience. While most acknowledged that the sponsoring USAID Office, either Population or Health, should be a primary user of NAS/CPOP results, others emphasized the importance of reaching members of Congress and other executive branch policymakers, as well as developing country policymakers.

Global Bureau, Center for Population, Health and Nutrition. Dr. Duff Gillespie, Director of the Center, identified USAID, specifically the sponsoring Office, as the principal audience for any commissioned NAS research. Over time, USAID staff have had increasing input into the shaping of the research agenda for NAS/CPOP studies, which has helped to improve their usefulness.

Office of Population. Office of Population staff felt that the NAS/CPOP's work was of greatest interest to a Washington, D.C., audience of technical experts responsible for guiding international population and health policy implementation. U.S. policymakers, notably Members of Congress and their staff, OMB personnel, and other executive branch foreign policy and population assistance decision-makers, and international donors were identified as other key audiences. USAID's population and health field officers and LDC policymakers were also considered to be important audiences, although most interviewees recognized that NAS/CPOP was not especially well-equipped to reach these audiences directly. The influence

of NAS/CPOP's work on the field would be experienced indirectly, for example, through the dissemination and technical assistance activities of Office of Population staff or their CAs.

Office of Health and Nutrition. Technical staff from the Office of Health and Nutrition see themselves as the primary audience for most of the studies that the NAS/CPOP conducted under their cooperative agreement. Under the Office of Health and Nutrition's latest organization, a division has been created that is responsible for health policy and sector reform. Recent personnel changes have contributed to bringing those responsible for health policy more into the mainstream of the Office of Health and Nutrition. Unfortunately, while the Office of Health and Nutrition feels well poised to make good use of NAS/CPOP research, supported by strong Office-wide consensus and up-to-date technical knowledge, the Office no longer has the funds to continue their cooperative agreement. Dr. Connie Carrino, Chief of the Health Policy Division, observed that efforts to involve field Missions in the formulation of research questions is likely to lead to less pertinent policy or programmatic questions. Because the current state of knowledge about AIDS, emerging diseases and other timely health policy issues is evolving so quickly, field staff, especially those based at relatively isolated missions, have a difficult time keeping up with the technical literature. However, officers in the field tend to have a good appreciation of the NAS/CPOP and are an important audience, although often a somewhat disadvantaged consumer, of studies of health issues.

Africa Bureau. Representatives in USAID's Africa regional and field offices identified technical field staff and LDC policymakers as key audiences. This was particularly true for the panel study, Population Dynamics in Sub-Saharan Africa. During the development of NAS/CPOP's Africa study, the Office of Population solicited recommendations from field officers in Africa concerning the research areas of greatest importance to their programs. However, because a significant amount of time elapsed between the solicitation and the release of the final reports, a number of the field officers probably moved on to other posts either in Washington or abroad. Changes in USAID administration may have also reduced the policy or program relevance of the earlier suggestions.

The Africa Bureau's concern with getting the results of the NAS/CPOP study to the field is reflected in their decision to have a summary brochure prepared, in both French and English, that was addressed primarily to an audience of African policy makers. The participation of the African Population Advisory Committee in the dissemination of the reports was an important feature of the policy outreach effort.

With the advent of Joint Program Planning teams, USAID field missions will play a greater role in policy and program decision-making than before and, therefore, may become an audience of increased importance for all NAS/CPOP studies, but especially those with direct relevance to budgetary decisions (e.g., Resource Allocation, Reproductive Health, Infant and Child Survival and Reproductive Change).

Program and Policy Coordination Bureau. Senior Population and Health Policy Advisor, Dr. Nils Daulaire, remarked that the most valuable contribution of the NAS/CPOP's work is to provide a high quality, objective review on general issues bearing on policy implementation. Daulaire cautioned that efforts to make NAS research too policy pertinent may compromise the quality of the final product. (Dr. Steve Sinding, the former director of the USAID Office of Population, made a similar point and felt that, under no circumstances, should there be a compromise in the scientific integrity of CPOP's work.)

A Washington-based audience of policymakers and program managers is the core audience for NAS/CPOP's work. Field officers and LDC policymakers would not benefit substantially, nor would regional bureau staff. Reports that emphasize influencing factors, or policy levers, and that are well synthesized tend to receive greatest attention. Because they are large and not well summarized or synthesized, a number of NAS/CPOP's recent publications (e.g., the series of reports on population dynamics in Africa) do not lend themselves to direct consumption, although they serve as useful reference materials.

### *3.3.2 Audience perceived by NAS/CBASSE/CPOP Members and Staff*

CPOP Members. The NAS/CPOP members see the international scientific community as the principal audience for their work, primarily because that is the audience that they have a comparative advantage (over other CAs) in reaching. The desire to conduct research that is useful to policymakers was expressed strongly by Committee members. However, the actual effort involved in ensuring the policy relevance of the research project and communicating research results to interested policymakers lies outside the members' areas of comparative advantage. Maintaining policy relevance and getting the research findings and recommendations into the hands of those who can make good policy or program use of them should be the charge of the NAS/CPOP staff, the sponsor, another CA with special strengths in policy communication (PRB was often mentioned), or some combination of the three. However, as noted above, the team feels that the Committee and its panels would benefit from having at least one member with experience in policy-making and dissemination and that one of the report reviewers should reflect this perspective.

NAS/CPOP Staff. CPOP staff identify two principal audiences for their work: members of the scientific community who have an interest in policy and members of the population policy and program world who have an interest in research. Representatives of USAID officials, technical officers for other donors, Hill staffers, and developing country policymakers may all be included among the key audiences for NAS/CPOP studies. While this is a somewhat different approach to thinking about target audiences, these two criteria probably are reliable in identifying potential good consumers of Academy research.

NAS/CBASSE Staff. In discussing audiences for NAS/CPOP reports, NAS/CBASSE Director Barbara Torrey and Faith Mitchell, Director of Social and Economic Studies, noted that USAID and other multilateral and bilateral donors constitute the principal audiences for CPOP's international work. They observed, however, that often insufficient forethought goes into identifying the intended audience for an activity, perhaps mostly because of uncertainty over what the findings will be. Veteran NAS reports specialist Eugenia Grohman affirmed that audience targeting and dissemination planning often cannot be begun until the Committee has some sense of what the key findings will be. The sponsor, who may or may not want the results disseminated widely, is always a key audience.

### 3.3.3 Dissemination

Members of the Population Policy and Research Communities. Dissemination to the population policy and research communities is the responsibility of the Committee. As mentioned in the discussion of audiences, Committee members do not feel that it is within their comparative advantage to communicate study findings directly to policymakers. CPOP Director Haaga, however, is very interested in working with USAID and other CAs to improve the dissemination of NAS/CPOP products to policy-maker audiences in Washington as well as abroad. While NAS/CPOP does not have a specific mandate to improve quality of knowledge about an issue among a broad policy audience, the Committee has offered such services, notably for the Turner "Beyond the Number" Conference, which was held to rally public support in advance of ICPD. Committee Chair Ron Lee participated in a panel at the conference.

In some cases, NAS/CPOP has taken a number of steps to ensure that its studies reach policymakers and researchers whom they may influence. Articles published in professional journals (*Journal of the American Medical Association*,<sup>4</sup> *New England Journal of Medicine*), summary booklets (*Population Dynamics in Sub-Saharan Africa*), and special briefings, such as CPOP member Dr. Mark Montgomery's presentation of some of the Africa Panel results to the World Bank and Dr. Sam Preston's presentations of some of the Africa and PGED work at ICPD and at the Summit of National Academies, are a few recent examples.

Several of the activities that have been used by other NRC committees might also be well-suited to CPOP's needs, for example, occasional open meetings with a maximum of 100 participants (in view of the wide interest in the topic, an open meeting involving the Reproductive Health Panel could be very useful), public briefings targeted to an audience of population and health reporters. A NAS/CPOP newsletter devoted exclusively to CPOP and relevant IOM activities would also enhance awareness of the Committee's work in the population policy and research community. To the best of the evaluators knowledge, however, no other Committee in the Academy has its own newsletter. Because NAS/CPOP has been described as giving more attention to policy dissemination than many other NRC committees, it would be consistent with CPOP's strong reputation and public policy orientation for it to be the first committee to introduce a newsletter especially devoted to the policy implications of its activities.

Many large CPOP reports, e.g., the seven large volumes that resulted from the Africa Panel, are written (and often reviewed) with a scientific audience in mind. Although there is a recognized need for shorter non-technical documents that can be easily and quickly read by non-technical audiences, especially outside of the research community, CPOP's experiences in preparing these successfully have been somewhat mixed. The Africa Panel is a good illustration of the efforts made in this direction and how the desired result was difficult to achieve. For the studies of the Africa panel, executive summaries of five of the studies were assembled into a booklet that was available at the August 1993 dissemination conference. Several of these summaries were rather technical in nature and there was a felt need for

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<sup>4</sup> The report of the Working Group on the Health Consequences of Contraceptive Use and Controlled Fertility was summarized in an article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, so that the results could be available, in an internationally disseminated journal, to a medical audience. (The Working Group felt that the results were already familiar to a demographic audience, although the report did add to their scientific credibility.)



interesting, non-technical summaries that could be more easily read and understood by non-technical audiences. This led to the decision to involve the Academy for Educational Development (AED) through the USAID/AFR project Health and Human Resources Analysis for Africa (HHRAA) in preparing the document. Upon seeing the first draft of the first chapter of a six-chapter summary report prepared by a person at AED, CPOP members and staff were not happy with the result, and the Panel chair (Ken Hill) and CPOP staff ended up doing the majority of the remainder of the writing.

In this case, CPOP concluded that reviewing and revising the text prepared by AED would be more time consuming than preparing the text themselves. AED did assist with the preparation of figures, artwork, and layout, and this was felt to be an important contribution to the appearance and readability of the document. Nonetheless, although this document is described as "a synthesis of six publications of the National Research Council", it consists, in fact, of summaries of six of the panel studies, with no attempt to synthesize or cross-fertilize them and little notion of the major question regarding Africa's "differentness" that motivated the Committee's Africa work. Indeed, a synthesis of the Africa panel studies would have been difficult because the various working groups did not use a common approach or framework. For example, the adolescent fertility study took a relatively anthropological approach, the economic reversals study took a largely economic approach, while the health study emphasized the technological effects of health programs. Trying to have each working group use a framework that incorporated all of these considerations might have been useful, but would have further encumbered the already large effort.

Furthermore, the summaries sometimes presumed a background that not all readers might have. (For example, Figure 2 compares data from the World Fertility Surveys (WFS) and the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), to make the point that several fertility-related practices have changed over time in such a way as to contribute to a decline in fertility. However, nowhere does the summary mention the dates of the WFS and DHS surveys, so the time periods being compared might not be clear to all readers.) This is disappointing, given that the strength of CPOP lies in their ability to synthesize a variety of materials.

In some cases population education organizations were completely unaware of a recent NAS publication that they felt would have been of considerable interest to a number of Congressional staff. For example, Jane DeLung, the President of the Population Resource Center, does not receive regular reports of CPOP's work. She felt that much of what CPOP does would be of great interest to certain members of Congress and will be calling the CPOP study director to discuss briefings on the Hill. While panel study reports are distributed to these groups, proceedings from workshops or expert meetings do not seem to be. In other cases, for example with the CA community, a project director will attend an expert meeting but other members of the project—many of whom often have great knowledge and interest in the subject—will remain unaware of the activity. One way to expand awareness among the CA and more program-oriented community, would be to post announcements of study findings and recommendations in PHN flash, a World Bank bulletin board.

**Recommendation No. 11: NAS/CPOP should explore posting announcements of all its new publications, but especially those that tend to be under-disseminated, notably, proceedings from expert meetings and workshops, on the PHN flash and other electronic bulletin boards.**

CPOP rightly recognizes the desirability of making key reports available in other languages, and, in an effort to reach international audiences, several CPOP reports have been translated into other languages (e.g., French for the summaries of the Africa studies, Spanish and French for the *Contraception and Reproduction* report). However, there seems to be considerable "reinventing of the wheel" in making arrangements for translations, even within CPOP. This must be an issue faced by others NAS committees and it should be dealt with as an Academy-wide issue rather than at the committee-specific level. The National Academy Press may be able to assist with the arrangement of translation contracts.

Congress and the World at Large. As discussed above in Section 2.1.2, NAS's Office of News and Public Information (ONPI) handles dissemination to the news media and the public, through public briefings, press briefings, announcement of studies through two NAS publications, *Reports and Events* and *NewsReport*. NAS's Office of External Affairs keeps apprised of Congressional hearings and facilitates liaison between relevant NAS Committees and appropriate Hill staff. The large number of press clippings summarizing key findings from various NAS/CPOP studies (e.g., the *Contraceptive Development* and *Contraception and Reproduction* studies both received front page coverage in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*) attest to the effectiveness of NAS's public dissemination activities.

Mailing Lists. NAS/CPOP distributes its reports widely. Approximately forty policymakers, foundation population officers, and other influential citizens with a keen interest in population issues receive complimentary copies of all CPOP reports. All Office of Population CAs receive the reports (addressed to the CA's library) as do North American and European universities with demography departments. Nearly ninety LDC population centers also receive a copy of each report. The present mailing lists have been developed with assistance from PRB. USAID and other sponsors receive large numbers of reports; USAID's Office of Population distributes the reports to its field officers through a monthly mailing.

Recommendations Regarding Dissemination. In order for the NAS to reach a larger U.S. policy audience, whether through special briefings or by distributing reference materials, the dissemination activity must appeal to CPOP members and staff and resources must be budgeted to cover the activity. Judging from the number of Congressional briefings and efforts by CPOP to solicit Hill staff participation in panel and other meetings, interest in dissemination activities has been high among study directors. Inadequate funding, especially to cover staff time, however, often is serious constraint.

Dissemination activities need to be adequately budgeted to cover material production, distribution, and, particularly, staff costs. Preparation of summary booklets, for example, as was done for Population Dynamics of Sub-Saharan Africa, can require extensive staff time, even when staff are reviewing text prepared by another organization. Sponsors often do not realize how much time is needed for summaries and syntheses, perhaps in part because it is

hard to fully anticipate dissemination costs at the beginning of a research activity. Furthermore, the Africa experience suggests that it may not always be cost-effective and result in a better product to turn summary efforts over to another organization. Perhaps more use of the editorial services within NRC would have been useful in preparing the Africa summary materials. On the other hand, the *Population Today* article that PRB prepared on The Demography of Aging workshop (see Appendix G) was cited as an example of a useful type of dissemination to a broad audience. However, in this case, the PRB author was very familiar with the subject matter being summarized.

**Recommendation No. 12:** Dissemination activities need to be adequately budgeted to cover materials production, distribution as well as staff costs. This has not been the case with all NAS/CPOP Panel studies.

**Recommendation No. 13:** For every major publication, there should be a short, non-technical summary that can be read quickly and comprehended by non-technical audiences. Careful consideration needs to be given to who should prepare such summaries. It is important that , together, the persons involved represent both in-depth knowledge of the subject matter and the ability to present results clearly in a crisp and interesting way to non-technical audiences.

**Recommendation No. 14:** Although the exact audiences cannot always be identified at the outset (because it is not yet clear what the main findings will be), likely potential audiences should be considered in shaping (and staffing) an activity.

**Recommendation No. 15:** NAS/CPOP work could reach a larger audience through use of additional dissemination mechanisms, such as briefings for USAID Mission staff or the general professional community, for example, in conjunction with the annual meetings of NCIH or APHA; public briefings on recent published works for members of the international population community (CAs, advocacy organizations); videotapes of briefings (for example, of presentations from the Population Dynamics in Sub-Saharan Africa conference), which, for example, could be sent to overseas field offices and embassies.

- Recommendation No. 16:** CPOP should consider issuing a periodic CPOP Newsletter, possibly every six months or once a year, noting the existence of new publications, how to obtain them (perhaps the Newsletter could include a tear-off order form), a summary of their main findings; mentioning other activities underway and other relevant Academy activities (e.g., the recent IOM study of female morbidity and mortality in Sub-Saharan Africa); and possibly reviewing older studies and their impact and continuing relevance. Such a newsletter should be sent broadly to U.S. and international researchers, policymakers, and others (including members of Congress) interested in population issues.
- Recommendation No. 17:** Other possible dissemination mechanisms to increase awareness by potential users of NAS/CPOP research (e.g., NGOs, CAs) about Committee activities could include broadening the circulation of the NAS publication Reports and Events to audiences interested in population issues and mentioning CPOP activities and reports in PAA Affairs, the APHA Newsletter and on the Internet.
- Recommendation No. 18:** Special efforts should be made to reach audiences on the Hill, e.g., members of Congress and their staffs. Collaboration with the Population Resource Center could be useful in this regard.
- Recommendation No. 19:** The Committee should prepare more journal articles that reach scientific audiences, especially different audiences. Journals such as Science should be considered for publication of findings of CPOP studies. Such journal articles provide opportunities to reach additional scientific audiences and provide valued publication opportunities for staff (especially junior staff).
- Recommendation No. 20:** CPOP should continue to make key reports available in other languages. Arrangements for translations should be dealt with as an Academy-wide issue rather than at the committee-specific level. The National Academy Press may be able to assist with the arrangement of translation contracts.

### 3.3.4 Use and Impact of CPOP Study Results

Impact on Knowledge. NAS/CPop studies have had varying impacts on knowledge, determined largely by the extent of their distribution within the population and health policy and research communities. In the evaluation team's interviews, *Developing New Contraceptives (DNC)* was frequently cited for raising awareness of salient issues that had hitherto not been considered of great importance, notably, product liability. Indeed, even though it was published five years ago, *DNC* was recently referenced in the current debate over welfare reform (see Besharov, March, 12, 1995 *Washington Post*, reproduced in Appendix H). It would seem that *DNC* is one of the most cited references on contraceptive development, a topic of considerable domestic and international policy interest.

*Contraception and Reproduction (C&R)* contributed significantly to the knowledge base of the population community. C&R served as a springboard for many derivative products (Family Planning saves Lives, produced by the IMPACT project, PRB; Health Consequences of Fertility RAPID presentations, The Futures Group International). Moreover, every DHS II and III final report includes a table showing the percentage of women and births falling into one of the risk groups identified in the study and the corresponding neonatal, infant, and child mortality rates for births occurring to women in each of the categories.

*Population Growth and Economic Development (PGED)* also made a significant contribution in terms of knowledge. Dr. Steve Sinding, former Office of Population Director and present Director of the Population Program at the Rockefeller Foundation, noted that, in hindsight, USAID had been too confident that the conclusion from PGED would suggest that population growth had a strong and direct negative effect on economic development. (Sinding noted, in retrospect, that the Office of Population had not read widely enough in the population and development literature to anticipate the ambiguous nature of the relationship.) The failure of PGED to legitimate such a conclusion was unanticipated, and hurt the Office. In this case, PGED had an impact on knowledge, although not necessarily the desired one.

*Organizing for Effective Family Planning Programs* continues to serve as a much used reference for Office of Population staff. The introductory section and the updated version of a framework for understanding how family planning programs affect fertility served as a point of departure for continued work on family planning program evaluation conducted by UNC/CPC under the EVALUATION project and was useful in preparing for that project. The chapters on management are also fairly widely read, even today, which reflects in some measure the relative dearth of literature on the subject of family planning program management. It is interesting to note that the Committee did not anticipate the extent of interest and long shelf life of this report. An insufficient number of copies were printed initially. A separate summary was commissioned from an outside consultant; when the first version of the summary did not pass committee review, the idea was dropped.

Smaller studies, especially Expert Meetings and Workshop proceedings, have suffered from weak visibility and are, consequently, not well known. The evaluation team found remarkably little awareness of the availability of the reports of such activities, which are official NRC publications and have undergone standard review procedures. Outside participation in such activities is sometimes limited, contributing to limited awareness of the study in both the research and policy and program-oriented population communities. Furthermore, because such studies are typically not linked to other CPHN activities, dissemination workshops may be

regarded as “flashes in a pan,” that is to say, one-time events often with no follow up and, as a result, little consequence for program implementation.

**Recommendation No. 21: The impact of expert meetings and workshops on population policy and program implementation could be enhanced if USAID were to consider the potential contribution of the topic to other longer-term activities included in their portfolio, and especially their policy, research and evaluation portfolios. As noted above, greater effort needs to be made to inform potential audiences of the availability of reports on such activities.**

Impact on Policy and Programs. It is often difficult to identify an impact on population policy that may be directly attributed to the work of NAS/CPOP. In trying to reconstruct how certain policy and program decisions came about, it may be useful to ask the counterfactual question, ‘What would have happened had X reached different conclusions, or not been undertaken?’ (see Stone, 1972). If PGED had reached the conclusions that the Office of Population anticipated, the Office might indeed have ‘won the war’ over those who argued that population growth had a neutral effect on economic development. PGED may have reinforced but certainly did not provide the basis for the Reagan administration’s statement at Mexico City in 1984.

Had *Contraception and Reproduction* not reached the conclusions it did, would there have been as much emphasis on the health rationale for family planning? In view of the Reagan administration’s dismissal of a macroeconomic rationale for family planning, the Office of Population had already begun advocating for a health rationale. C&R strengthened the case for the health rationale. The adoption of population policies by a number of Sahelian countries in the early 1990s on health grounds may also have occurred more rapidly than it would have had C&R reached different conclusions. However, other important policy decisions that recognized the linkages between family planning and child survival had already been made before the release of the C&R and would not be influenced by the statement of the NAS.<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps the perspective of the Academy is to look for policy impact in terms of the identification of areas where further knowledge or research is needed (see Haaga, 1994). However, the evaluation team found little evidence that NAS/CPOP studies were viewed in this

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<sup>5</sup> For example the decision to expand UNICEF’s package of essential child survival interventions from GOBI to GOBI-FFF [Growth Monitoring and Promotion, Oral rehydration therapy, Breastfeeding and better weaning, and Immunization together with Family Planning and birth spacing, Food supplements, and Female Education] occurred in the late 1980s. The USAID Child Survival fund was established in the mid-1980s and included promotion of healthy birth spacing. However, because Rep. Chris Smith’s militant opposition to abortion and international family planning, the birth spacing elements within the child survival were not at the forefront of activities. The decision to include a ‘soft earmark’ for population in the Development Fund for Africa may have been reinforced by the contributions of family planning to child survival as legitimized in C&R. A separate child survival earmark for the Fund suggested that institutional incentives discouraged placing too much emphasis on the child survival benefits of family planning by either population or child survival advocates.

light by the sponsor. Rather, the sponsor expressed the expectation that NAS/CPOP research would provide a balanced, independent review of research concerning key policy questions and perhaps even occasionally anticipate burning policy issues. In the case of *Developing New Contraceptives*, it would seem that the sponsor's expectations were fully met. However, with broader social scientific inquiry, it is less clear that the sponsor's expectations of clear policy impact can be—or have been—realized.

A recent and important impact that the NRC has had has been to serve as a model of scientific ombudsman for academies all over the world. The meeting of the world Academies of Science in 1993 was significant in terms of international population policy because it led to the formulation and signing of a statement on population and sustainable development by 60 national academies, which was then presented at ICPD. It is not clear whether the statement directly influenced the text of the Programme of Action; however, the weight of recommendations from the world's leading scientific institutions must surely have given scientific credibility, thereby, reinforcing many of the other recommendations being made by advocacy and donor groups. The NRC's efforts to build partnerships with academies in China and India are also laudable.